

by a wikke entente; for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende. Alwey he maketh a But, atte laste ende, that is digne of moore blame, than worth is al the preisynge. The seconde spece is, that if a man be good, & dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up / so / down, to his shrewed entente. The thridde is, to amenuse the bountee of his neighebor. The fourthe spece of bakbityng is this; that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn: Pardee! swich a man is yet bet than he; in dispreisynge of hym that men preise. The fiftte spece is this; for to consente gladly & herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk. This synne is ful greet, and ay encreeseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter. After bakbityng cometh grucchyng or murmuracioun; and somtyme it spryngeth of impaciencie agayns God, & somtyme agayns man. Agayns God it is, whan a man grucchet agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or los of catel, or agayn reyn or tempest; or elles grucchet that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that goode men han adversitee. And alle thise thynges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance of God. Somtyme comth grucching of avarice; as Judas gruced agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man grucchet of goodnesse that hymself dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.

SOMTyme comth murmure of pride; as whan Simon the Pharisee gruched agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approached to Jhesu Crist, and weep to his feet for hire synnes. And somtyme grucchyng sourdeth of envye; whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond thyng that is fals.

MURMURE eek is ofte amonges servaunts that gruchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thynges; and, forasmuche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundements of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche, and murmure prively, for verray despit; which wordes men clepen: The develes Pater noster, though so be that the devel ne hadde nevere Pater noster, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. Somtyme grucchyng comth of ire, or prive hate, that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. Thanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte; thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighebor semeth to hym bitter and

unsavory. Thanne cometh discord, that unbyndeth alle manere of freendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge, as whan a man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighebor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth acusynge, as whan a man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighebor, which that is lyght nyght and day to accusen us alle. Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighebor prively if he may; & if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to brennen his hous pryvely, or empoysone or sleen his beestes, and semblable thynges.

Remedium contra peccatum Invidie.

IOWOL I speke of the remedie agayns the foule synne of envye. First, is the lovyng of God principal, & lovyng of his neighebor as hymself; for soothly, that oon ne may nat been withoute that oother. And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebor thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes, alle we have o fader fleschly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve; and eek o fader espirituel, and that is God of hevene. Thy neighebor artow holden for to love, & wilne hym alle goodnesse; and therefore seith God: Love thy neighebor as thyself; that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf & of soule. And moore-over, thou shalt love hym in word, & in benigne amonestynge, and chastisynge; and conforten hym in his anoyes, and preyre for hym with al thyng herte. And in dede thou shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thy owene person. And therefore, thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entisynge of wikked ensample. Thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of his thynges. Understood eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comaundement of God; & soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thy enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake, by his comaundement. For if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, forsothe God noldenatrocyyven us to his love that been his enemy. Agayns thre manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym, he shal doon thre thynges, as thus. Agayns hate & rancour of herte, he shal love hym in herte. Agayns chiding and wikked wordes, he shal preyre for his enemy. And agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon hym bountee. For Crist seith: Loveth youre enemys, & preyre

eth for hem that speke yow harm; and eek for hem that yow chacen & pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten. Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu Crist to do to oure enemys. for soothly, nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and parvey, oure enemys han moore nede to love than oure freendes; and they that to love than oure freendes, to hem shal men moore nede have, certes, in thilke dede doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist, that deyde for his enemys. And inasmuche as thilke love is the moore grevous to performe, insomuche is the moore gretter the merite; & therefore the lovyng of our enemy hath confounded the venym of the devel. for right as the devel is discomfited by humylitee, right so is he wound-ed to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes, thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye from mannes herte. The speces of this paas shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwyng declared.

Sequitur de Ira.

AFTER envye wol I discryven the synne of ire. for soothly, whoso hath envye upon his neighebor, anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe, in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye; for soothly, he that is proude or envyous is lightly wrooth. This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Seint Augustyn, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blood of man quyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to hym that he hateth. for certes, the herte of man, by eschawfynge & moevynge of his blood, wexeth so trouble, that he is out of alle juggement of resoun. But ye shal understonde that ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good, & that oother is wikked. The goode ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse and agayns wikkednesse; & therefore seith a wys man: that Ire is bet than pley. This ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse; nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the mysdede of the man; as seith the prophete David: Irascimini et nolite peccare.

Understandeth, that wikked ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn ire, or hastif ire, withouten avisement & consentynge of resoun. The menyng and the sens of this is, that there-soun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire; & thanne it is venial. Another

ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonie of herte avysed and cast biforn; with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth; and soothly, this is deedly synne. This ire is so displesant to God, that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the Hooly Goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the liknesse of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule; and put in hym the liknesse of the devel, and bynymeth the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This ire is a ful greet plesauce to the devel; for it is the develes fourneys, that is eschawfed with the fir of helle. for certes, right so as fir is moore mighty to destroyen erthely thynges than any oother element, right so ire is myghty to destroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

LOKE how that fir of smale gleedes, that been almoost dede under asshen, wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymston. Right so ire wol everemo quyken agayn, whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte. for certes, fir ne may nat comen out of nothyng, but if it were first in the same thyng naturely; as fir is drawn out of flyntes with steel. And, right so as pride is oftetyne matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as seith Seint Ysidre, that whan men maken fir of thilke tree, and covere the coles of it with asshen, soothly the fir of it wol lasten al a yeer or moore. And right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is ones conceived in the hertes of som men, certein it wol lasten peraventure from oon Estre/day unto another Estre/day, and moore. But certes, thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of God al thilke while.

IN this forseide develes fourneys ther forgen thre shrewes: pride, that ay bloweth & encreeseth the fir by chidinge & wikked wordes. Thanne stant envye, and holdeth the hoot iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe toonges of long rancour. And thanne stant the synne of contumelie or strif & cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by vileyns reprevynges. Certes, this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hymself and eek to his neighebor. for soothly, almoost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebor comth of wratthe. for certes, outrageous wratthe dooth al that evere the devel hym comaundeth; for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his sweete mooder. And in his outrageous anger and ire, alas! alas! ful many oon at that tyme feelet in his herte ful wikkedly, both of Crist and of alle his halwes. Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Alas! it bynymeth from man